

Understanding the E-rate Funding Commitment Wave Process

1. How will I be notified of my E-rate Funding Commitment?

The SLD will be sending out Funding Commitment Decision Letters to inform applicants of the E-rate discounts. These letters will be mailed in waves, rather than waiting for all applications to be fully processed before issuing any letters. Only those applicants who submitted complete requests within the “application window” will be receiving Funding Commitment Decision Letters.

2. When will the first wave of letters be sent and how frequently will the waves of letters be sent?

Every other week a wave of letters will be issued to applicants. The first wave will be released on July 23, 2001 with the second wave being mailed two weeks later. As each wave is sent, we will announce its size and post state-by-state information on our Web Site.

3. How will I know which wave my letter is in?

There is no definitive way to know in advance which wave a particular Funding Commitment Decision Letter might be in. Normally, we will post information about each wave on our public Web Site the first business day after it has been mailed. To obtain a general sense of the timing of your funding commitment, please see questions 7-9.

4. Will I receive only one Funding Commitment Decision Letter?

No, not necessarily. We will issue Funding Commitment Decision Letters according to the FCC’s rules of priority (See questions 5 & 6 for details) when answers are known about any of the requests made in your application(s). If you submitted multiple applications for services, you will receive more than one Funding Commitment Decision Letter. If you submitted only one application for discounts on all three types of service – you may receive more than one Funding Commitment Decision Letter.

5. How is each wave formed?

There are three factors determining how each wave is formed:

- The FCC rules of priority: There are two rules of priority. “Priority one” approved requests are for discount on telecommunications services and Internet access and “Priority Two” approved requests are for discounts on internal connections. If “Priority One” services can be fully funded, discount requests for internal connections, or “Priority Two” services, are funded beginning with the highest need at the 90% discount level.
- Successful Data Entry: The date when the application was successfully entered into the SLD database will also determine when a Funding Commitment Decision Letter may be sent.

- Complete Processing: Before a funding commitment can be made, the SLD must complete processing of your application, including the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review process.

We have set aside funds to cover all telecommunications and Internet access requests received inside the filing window. We will consider “priority two” requests – internal connection requests – with the 90% applicants first and will work down the discount matrix if sufficient funds are available.

6. If funds are available for internal connections requests below the 90% discount level, how will SLD make these funding decisions?

Consistent with FCC rules, we will consider internal connections requests below the 90% discount level, by discount level – 89%, 88%, 87%, etc.

7. I sent my Form 471 in to SLD electronically – very early in the process last November. How will that affect the timing of my letter?

The timing will depend on how much time your application spent in Program Integrity Assurance review. However, applicants submitting electronic applications should generate a funding commitment letter sooner than a comparable paper application.

8. I filed my Form 471 on paper and it spent a long time in Problem Resolution. I received a number of phone calls and faxes from SLD offices in Kansas. How will that affect the timing of my letter?

The date of successful entry into the data system is one of the three key factors for forming the waves. The Problem Resolution process was focused completely on readying application for data entry, so a lengthy Problem Resolution process would mean a later data entry date and therefore later delivery for review by the Program Integrity Assurance team. If your application didn’t require lengthy PIA review, you may still receive your letter in one of the earlier waves.

9. I have some issues still outstanding with your Program Integrity Assurance team based in New Jersey. The extra documentation they’re looking for might take me several more days to complete. How will that affect the timing of my letter?

To receive a funding commitment, applications must have completed Program Integrity Assurance review, so you won’t receive your letter until we’ve resolved any outstanding PIA issues with you. We have, however, set aside funds to cover your telecommunications and Internet access requests, and have included your internal connections requests in our working estimate of demand in your discount band, so that your PIA review won’t affect your actual funding, only the timing of your Funding Commitment Decision Letter.